



Studies to Support the Work of the MHCC Health Care Access and Reimbursement Task Force

Background & Significance

- Guidelines recommend PCPs screen for mental health problems
- PCPs are performing medication management & counseling
- Little information on extent to which PCPs bill & are reimbursed by insurers for these services
- PCPs may bill for psych services using preventive services CPTs, though reimbursement varies by insurers
- Lack of reimbursement = lack of mental health screening (?)



Research Questions

- Clinical appropriateness of PCPs performing services?
- Legal/regulatory restrictions on PCP's?
- Billing codes & carrier policies?
- Impact on health care costs?
- Access to mental health care?
- Relevant experience from other states?

Background & Significance

- Presently, after-hours care reimbursed at standard rates
- Concern that after-hours care, including telephone services, not adequately compensated, especially since:
 - After-hours care could result in reduced ED use;
 - Concerns about liability;
 - Telephone care is more cost-effective.
- Though the CPT manual classifies telephone services under case management, it is generally thought that few insurers provide coverage.

Research questions

- How is 'after-hours care' defined?
- How much after-hours care provided?
- Is patient demand for after-hours care being met?
- How would reimbursement be structured and what are carrier policies/views?
- Extent of substitution for ED care?
- Impact on cost savings?



Analytical Approach

- Environmental Scan
 - Review of the literature
 - Examine state regulations
 - Determine other states' experiences
- Interviews with insurance carriers, providers, provider associations.



- Review of:
 - issues related to clinical appropriateness and practice
 - existing empirical or policy analyses
 - current payer practices
 - regulatory requirements in Maryland and other states
- Potential implications of change on overall health care costs and PCP remuneration
- Policy options & recommendations